

SCISSETT PARTNERSHIP

Local Ties and Junior Cricket by Matt Ottey

Nortonthorpe's ties to the local community are potentially one of its biggest strengths, and hopefully the future will be even more prosperous now that a deal has been struck with Scissett Middle School.



The deal means that the school's cricket team will play their home games on Nortonthorpe's ground, and although the club are not gaining anything immediately, stronger links in the community are beneficial in the long run, as Roger Littlewood, Nortonthorpe's secretary, explains: "We basically want to strengthen that relationship between the club and the school, which is essentially what the ground is there for - for the community, and they are part of the community."

George Norton left the land to the club in a deed that states clearly that the land must always be used for sport, and will always belong to the community. With this in mind, Roger approached the school and the deal was struck.

Essentially, Nortonthorpe are also looking into the possibility of re-starting a junior side, and the school seems a logical base of potential players, as Roger explains: "Kids these days have more things to occupy their mind, such as being sat in front of a Playstation sadly, instead of getting some fresh air and exercise by playing cricket. I'm hoping that we can reverse that situation now this partnership is in place."

Adrian Whittaker is Nortonthorpe's groundsman. Back in 2002, while still playing for the club, he started an under-13s 8-a-side junior team which ran for three years before having to disband. He said: "Unfortunately, once the players moved up to under-15s we needed 11 players, and due to the size of the village and the kids' holidays it meant we were always missing three or four each week."

Eventually Nortonthorpe will be looking to re-form a junior side and, with a steady base of players, one or two, depending on their level of ability and interest, may even be looking at playing their adult cricket at Nortonthorpe.

“I think it’s essential that we have some sort of junior team in place,” says Roger, “because we need to be able to have a feed of players who are going to help preserve the club in the future.”

“So I’m hoping we can get some youngsters coming through the middle school who might be good enough to have the odd second team game for us. But probably more importantly, we may have a chance of forming a junior side - we shall see.”

Essentially, the two organisations will be promoting cricket in the area and getting more kids into the game at a young age. Surely this can only be a good thing for Scissett Middle School, Nortonthorpe Cricket Club and cricket in general.